



Environmental Indicators Initiative and Draft Report on the Environment



“I subscribe to an environmental philosophy that rewards results, not programs. To reward results, we must measure outcomes. The ‘Environmental Indicators Initiative’ measures outcomes by providing the first-ever systematic, comprehensive and national accounting of U.S. environmental progress. EPA is committed to continuing and refining this effort.”

*-- Administrator Mike Leavitt
June 21, 2004*

EPA’s Draft Report on the Environment

In June 2003, EPA published its first-ever national *Draft Report on the Environment*, using available data and indicators to describe national environmental conditions and human health concerns. Two companion documents – one for readers with a general interest in the environment and another for more technical readers – describe:

- current environmental conditions and trends;
- data gaps and research needs; and,
- the challenges that government, EPA, and our partners face in filling these gaps and research needs.

EPA’s next *Report on the Environment* is planned for release during Spring 2006.

Our *Draft Report* uses indicators such as the number of people living in areas not meeting national air quality standards, numbers of days that beaches are closed or under advisory conditions, and children’s exposures to environmental pollutants. The indicators measure the results that EPA, our partners and stakeholders are achieving in protecting human health and the environment nationwide.

Managing for Results

Our “Indicators Initiative” moves EPA toward a performance-based – rather than process-based, environmental protection system. We are examining the connection among the strategic goals we set and how national reporting and indicators can help us improve our performance and manage for results in the future. Environmental indicators also offer us the opportunity to track and anticipate environmental and health issues that may not currently, but could be of future concern.

Our Environmental Indicators Initiative

Launched in November, 2001, EPA's *Environmental Indicators Initiative* responds to the President's call to have all agencies and departments manage for results. Developing indicators that can be used to report on and measure environmental conditions at the national, regional, state, and local level will help everyone manage for results in the future. In addition our *Initiative* will: publish regular reports on the state of the environment; advance the development of scientifically-sound indicators; foster data-sharing partnerships; and, provide the technology and support that enables us to exchange and access data and indicators.

Collaboration is Key to Our Success

Collaborating with all of our partners and stakeholders is critical to our success. Sharing data and indicators with our federal, tribal, state, and local partners and engaging all of our stakeholders are important first steps. Our on-going efforts to examine a full range of environmental and human health activities at different levels requires insight and data from many other agencies and organizations. Our national dialogue sessions (October, 2003 - June, 2004) and the comments that we have received on our *Draft Report* so far, have been very helpful in helping us develop the next set of indicators, fill data gaps and research needs and shape our next *Report on the Environment*.

Our future *Reports on the Environment* will be available in both electronic and print formats. Our electronic *Report on the Environment* (e-ROE) is intended to:

- help our partners make decisions, develop and use indicators and measure their results, and,
- help the public access information, data, maps and graphs about environmental conditions and trends where they live, study, work and play.

Further Information

For further information, please visit our *Indicators* web site at: www.epa.gov/indicators. Notices of new publications or upcoming EPA indicator events are posted on our web site.

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